

**MINUTES OF THE
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING TASK FORCE**

Wednesday, May 12, 2004 – 9:00 a.m. – Room W135 House Building

Members Present:

Sen. Carlene M. Walker, Senate Chair
Rep. Rebecca Lockhart, House Chair
Sen. Karen Hale
Sen. Paul Julander
Rep. J. Stuart Adams
Rep. Craig W. Buttars
Rep. Brad Dee
Rep. John Dougall
Rep. Neil A. Hansen
Rep. Neal B. Hendrickson
Rep. Todd E. Kiser

Members Absent:

Sen. David L. Gladwell
Sen. Sheldon L. Killpack
Sen. John L. Valentine

Staff Present:

Benjamin N. Christensen, Policy Analyst
Shannon C. Halverson, Associate General Counsel
Joy L. Miller, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present and a copy of materials can be found at www.le.utah.gov or by contacting the committee secretary, Joy Miller, at 538-1032.

1. Task Force Business

Chair Lockhart called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. She welcomed Sen. Julander and Rep. Dee as new members of the Task Force. Sen. Gladwell, Sen. Killpack, and Sen. Valentine were excused from the meeting. Transportation Commission members were introduced to the Task Force.

MOTION: Sen. Hale moved to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2003 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Centennial Highway Fund Program Update

Mr. Mark Bleazard, Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst, distributed and reviewed "Centennial Highway Program FY 1997 - 2017" dated 5/12/04. If funding of the CHF (Centennial Highway Fund) continues as in the past, net capital expenditures will total approximately \$3.3 billion. Adequate funds will be available to complete CHF projects with the existing revenue stream assuming there will not be a need for significantly more bonding. He pointed out that \$182,316,000 in construction expenditures will be carried over in FY 2008 and that an ending payment of \$121,599,000 will be needed after FY 2017.

Mr. John Njord, Director, UDOT (Utah Department of Transportation), distributed and reviewed "Centennial Highway Fund Projects as funded by the 2004 Legislature" dated 5/7/04. He discussed the projects that have been delayed because of funding setbacks. The remainder of the projects listed are progressing well.

The Task Force requested the project in Milford that was added to the CHF be reflected in the outline.

3. Transportation Needs Update

Mr. Darrell Cook, Mountainlands Association of Governments, distributed maps of "Wasatch Front Area

Long Range Highway Projects" and "Wasatch Front Area Long Range Transit Projects." Mr. Cook also distributed "Moving Forward" which provides an outline of where transportation planning is headed in Utah County. He distributed and discussed "Long Range Transportation Plans - Highway Financial Assumptions." He said they are proposing to update their plan to be in place by September.

Mr. Chuck Chappell, WFRC (Wasatch Front Regional Council), distributed "Communique" which is a newsletter of the WFRC. He said the WFRC is taking a multi-modal transportation planning approach and has adopted an aggressive transit plan for the future. WFRC is in the process of identifying the transportation outlook for the next 27 years with only the current sources of funding available.

Mr. Lowell Elmer, Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization, pointed out that in 2005 they will update their long-range plan for the next 30 years which will include an updated estimate of financial needs. He discussed the projects that are a priority for them. He said the 2030 transportation needs for the Dixie MPO should be \$800 million.

Mr. Njord said there are billions of dollars worth of need in the transportation area. He distributed a list of some of those needs. One of the most important activities UDOT performs is taking care of the existing system. He pointed out that UDOT funding is stagnant, future federal funding is uncertain, and costs are increasing. Adopting innovative approaches to these challenges is important.

Mr. Glen Brown, Commission (Transportation Commission), indicated UDOT does not have the resources to fund any capacity projects, only maintenance. The Commission is able to fund less than 40 percent of requested roadway preservation needs. Infrastructure components are continually being reevaluated.

Mr. John English, UTA (Utah Transit Authority), stated transit is a critical component of transportation. UTA is trying to position itself to deal with upcoming growth and is working with metropolitan planning organizations on the projects being developed. He said UTA is excited about the possibility of expanding its services, but realizes it will take a great deal of funding.

4. Transportation Funding Sources Discussion

Mr. Christensen distributed and reviewed "States With Variable Fuel Tax Rates" and an updated version of "State Excise Taxes on Gasoline and Diesel as of 04/01/04." He referred to "Potential Transportation Revenue Tools" which was included in the mailing packet. Gas tax currently provides 85 percent of transportation funds. He said the three major potential funding sources are fuel tax, registration fees, and sales tax.

Ms. Kathryn Pett UTA, explained that the item of "Sale Lease Back Financing for Transportation" is under review at the federal level.

The chairs requested that more information be obtained on toll roads and what Oregon is doing with vehicle mileage fees.

Mr. David Creer, Utah Trucking Association, pointed out that most ports-of-entry are privately administered and that toll roads should be limited to new roads. He said the vehicle mile tax is a regressive tax that is a disaster for the motorist and commercial vehicles.

Mr. Bleazard pointed out that approximately 16 percent of total sales tax collected is automobile related.

Mr. Christensen reviewed "Utah Highway User Taxes and Fees" which was included in the mailing packet. He encouraged the Task Force to determine if the taxes are fair and if everyone is paying a fair share.

Mr. Steve White, Utah County Commissioner, briefly discussed internal service funds. He noted that when an internal service fund works to limit the demand, it is always beneficial.

Mr. Tim Parker, Mayor of Saratoga Springs, stated their frustration comes with state roads that serve their community. He said he looked forward to the Task Force visiting the area to examine the conditions.

Mr. Robin Riggs, Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce, said they are trying to put together a business coalition to support a broad transportation plan and to develop ways to fund that plan. He expressed a desire to be a part of the planning process.

Mr. Glade Sowards, Utah Energy Office, commented that there is a very small percentage of alternative fuel vehicles on the roads. To impose a special tax on these vehicles would generate very little revenue.

Mr. Bill Myers, resident of West Jordan, spoke in favor of allowing HOT lanes which would be the equivalent of adding one-half of a lane to the freeway.

5. Other Items / Adjourn

Chair Lockhart indicated the next meeting of the Task Force will be in northern Utah County. She hoped the Task Force would be able to develop a plan or a set of options by the end of the interim for the Legislature to consider.

MOTION: Rep. Buttars moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Chair Lockhart adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.